

country, so if we go on the floor and we make sure we said they should get paid, it's going to make us look good with the American public."

And so we did that. In all of this, we failed to negotiate, we don't have a continuing resolution for everybody, but we struck this little blow for veterans.

And after NEWT GINGRICH went to them and said they could have a deal with the President to have a continuing resolution, they said, "No, we don't want to do it. We don't care what you say, NEWT GINGRICH." The new Members, the freshmen, said, "No, we don't want a deal."

After not having a deal, they said the reason they did not want to do it is because the President had not committed to a 7-year balanced budget, nor did he want to accept the Congressional Budget Office projections and their understanding of how the economy would be working over the next 7 years. That is what they said.

Well, that has been cleared up, so you would think they would have negotiated today. But no, they have not done that. They took a vote, led by the Republicans on the other side of the aisle, to just go home. Just go home. Go home to their families, to our families.

And, yes, most of us would like to do that. But what about the Federal employees and the others that do not know what is going to happen to them? We could have passed a continuing resolution. They did something strange called a recess, an adjournment that is called a recess, and they kind of said, "and we have the opportunity to call you back at some given point in time."

And so this adjournment fashioned as a recess has taken place. But before they left, a lot of damage was done. A lot of damage was done because we passed out a conference report on welfare.

This conference report on welfare basically cuts about \$60 billion out of welfare and, oh, that is easy to do, because welfare has become kind of the political football of politics. If you get up and rant and rave against worthless people who are getting the taxpayers' dollars, oh, you can get some votes. You can get some votes, and you can have people believe that somehow you are protecting the taxpayers.

It is easy to beat up on children. It is easy to beat up on poor people.

"They don't have any power. They can't do anything. And I can get get some votes."

Well, they struck a blow against the children, \$60 billion in cuts. Oh, they took the safety net from under the children. You should see the havoc that was wreaked upon these children and their families, because protective services will be hurt.

□ 1845

A lot of things will be done to children that I do not think any of us can be proud of. So I stand here this

evening to say, it is shameful what has taken place over the last few days. None of us should be proud of it. None of us should want to go home and face our constituents or our families because it is not honorable what we have done here.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. NORWOOD] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. NORWOOD addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

BALANCING THE BUDGET IS FOR THE CHILDREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, as I listened to the debate today and this week, and I think many of the Members in the House and across the country have listened to it, there is a lot of blame going on. Some people are blaming Mr. DOLE; others are blaming Speaker GINGRICH. Some are blaming the freshman class. Others are blaming the President. Others are blaming—and I understand the President actually got mad at the moderates tonight—and then there is a Democrat coalition that is getting some of the blame. And so there seems to be plenty of blame and plenty of theories as to who is the problem here. But whatever the excuse is, whatever group you blame it on, the fact is we still have not resolved this budget impasse.

There is an old World War II saying of the veterans that said that the difficult we do immediately; the impossible takes a little bit longer. And it would appear that it is impossible right now in 1995 America for us to settle this budget quickly or easily. But I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that we will be able to resolve it. I say that because of a great confidence and belief in the American people, in the American system. Sure, we are having a very difficult debate. It is extremely hard. Democrats are coming, every day they are saying the Republicans hate children, the Republicans hate the elderly, it is the book deal, it is one thing or the other.

I know on their side that the Republicans are accusing Democrats of wanting to spend all the money in the world and yet, when you look at it, Democrats have something to say in this argument. When you look at it, the Republicans have something to say.

I think what the American people really want is a balanced budget and we are the folks who have been elected to do the job. I believe that we can get together and resolve this. Dwight D. Eisenhower said, I am paraphrasing, that once the American people have made up their mind to do something, there is little that can be done to stop

it from happening. I think the American people have made up their mind about the balanced budget and I believe in that context this debate is, I say, fortunately beyond Washington. We will get a balanced budget.

What is it that we are fighting about? The Republican plan, for all the cries about the deep cuts, the Republican plan does not even freeze spending. It increases it \$3 trillion over the next 7 years. The President wants to increase it \$4 trillion over the next 7 years.

As I talk one to one to my Democrat friends and Republican friends, we are all confident that we could resolve it. People from urban areas, people from rural areas, people from the West Coast, East Coast, it does not matter, we believe on an individual basis we can resolve it.

I am seeing a little bit more movement this last week in that direction, informal talks, nothing big, nothing that has picked up in the media, nothing that some of the leadership has even recognized. Yet there is a lot more talking going on than the media would have the American people believe.

So I say with a great optimism, yes, it is too bad we are going to be going home and folks are still out of work and so forth. I think it is important for us to all realize, these are real people, real paychecks, real jobs. They want to be working. They want to know that the security of that paycheck coming in twice a month is going to be there. At the same time, though, I am confident that we are going to get this thing resolved because, and to quote another great leader, Ronald Reagan, we are Americans. We will do the right thing. We will get this thing done, Democrats and Republicans alike.

People are using the children as their shield a lot around here. We are doing this for the kids. What if kids could vote? What if the American children, what if that average 10-year old out there could suddenly vote and, realizing the issues as the rest of us do, and that 10-year old, like my son John, would look up and say, wait a minute, Dad, you mean to tell me that all that spending that you are doing today, all that money that you act like it is yours when it is not, you mean to tell me that you are borrowing money that I am going to have to be paying back and my friends are going to be paying back. Dad, I think you all better so some serious cutting or do some serious spending reductions or do whatever it takes so that my generation is not strapped hopelessly with this \$5 trillion debt that you are bumping against right now.

I would say, we bring kids in the argument, what would happen, Mr. Speaker, if children were allowed to vote? I think this whole formula would change and I can promise you, we could balance that budget in a hurry because it is not fair what we are leaving our children in the way of debt.

A TEST FOR DEMOCRATS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this evening to appeal to good sense and good government and accommodation consistent with principle on my side and on the other side. Today there have been requests to the GOP leadership to consider that AFDC checks are due to go out with no one to send them out, to consider that the District of Columbia Government is up and running without the necessary authority. One of the leaders offered that in the State of California it was not clear that Medicaid bills could be paid.

On the Democratic side, occasionally I have heard what the other side has become more closely identified with. That is a kind of all or nothing response. I must tell you, Mr. Speaker, my heart is with the all or nothing response, because my largest employer is the Federal Government and its Federal employees in my own district who are being penalized as they sit home waiting to be called back to work on an involuntary furlough. But at least my Federal employees have been promised by the majority that they will be paid.

What promise has been made to children on AFDC that they will be paid before Christmas or that those on Medicaid will be paid before Christmas and, God help us, that the Nation's Capital will be standing before Christmas?

It is time for cool and mature heads to consider what is at stake. This is a real test for my side of the aisle, I must say, for we have gotten up consistently this year to speak for the poor, to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. I do not see how it would be possible for us to go home for Christmas and tell people that we had said that, if it all does not come through, then no way AFDC will come through, no D.C. will come through, no Medicaid will come through. In that case we have adopted the tactics of the other side.

Both sides need to step back. I appreciate, frankly, that the majority is willing to consider relieving those most in need of relief by some kind of special CR and have only said that this should not be the subject of great contention. This is a test for my side. Do you mean it or not, or is it only the Members of Congressional Black Caucus who mean it or the Hispanic Caucus who mean it, or the women who mean it, or do all the Democrats mean it? Do the Republicans mean it? Can we put aside as Christmas dawns our rancor to say we do not want to go home, and say to poor children on welfare, I am sorry, your check will come sometime in the future?

For us, a missed check may get us over. For people on welfare, a missed check means no food and no shelter for far too many. For the District of Columbia, it is a shameful day when we

have abandoned our constitutional responsibility and said to the District, well, we will reach out and get you when we can. Meanwhile, you are on your own.

Eighty-five percent of the money up here that we cannot get out because no appropriation has been passed is money raised in the District of Columbia from District taxpayers. There is a moral obligation, especially on these three issues, not to say all or nothing, not to get up and make some kind of vein motion knowing it will lose and, therefore, toss us all out.

There is a moral obligation on this side and this side to say, at the very least, we will call a truce when it comes to poor children on welfare who will not be fed and might be put out on the street before Christmas. We will call a truce when it comes to whether or not 600,000 people in the District of Columbia will have a government that is open and collecting trash and doing what government must do for people to keep going. We will call a truce when it comes to Medicaid. Is that what we want? It is not what we want. But if we have gotten the majority to understand that they must consider that, how can we pull back now?

It is a test and we must look at each and every one of us to see whether any of us causes this test to be failed. We must take it into account. If, after all, we have had to say about children and about the poor, we are willing, we are willing to stand here and allow checks to be missed for them, it is a test. Either we mean it or we do not. Whose principles are these? Who do we speak for? Can we pass the test?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. COLLINS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. COLLINS of Georgia addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. MARTINI] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. MARTINI addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GEKAS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, there is not a dime's difference between the two major political parties, was the observation of a political writer some years ago. I think that that description can be in a broader sense applied to the negotiations that are now taking place even as we speak and which have so much to do with the eventual outcome of the cherished balanced budget.

Why do I say there is very little difference in applying it to the current negotiations? If we would recall only in a brief recent history, the President of the United States, when he was candidate Clinton, offered a tax cut and said that, when he became President, he would make certain that the middle class would at his hands receive a middle class tax cut, much needed tax cut.

When the current negotiations began, one of the big issues was whether or not we should have a tax cut. So it seems that both parties, the Republicans, who want this tax cut and who have promised it in the Contract with America, have matched the President, who offered it when he was candidate Clinton in the 1992 elections. So has not the issue of tax cuts been resolved once and for all? Should not the American people expect a tax cut?

If they have agreed on that, what are they arguing about with respect to whether or not there should be a tax cut? President Clinton, after he became the Chief Executive, criticized the Republican tax cut as being unworthy of consideration for one reason or another. Yet he has proposed a tax cut. Now let us skip over to the other big element in the negotiations: Medicare reform.

The Republicans are being excoriated on an hourly basis by the opposition on their daring to try to slow the growth of Medicare. Will we not recall, Mr. Speaker, that it was the President and the President's people who first brought that consideration before the public by offering, in the 1993 session, 1993, the first year of that session, a plan to slow the growth of Medicare? So now the second largest issue which is on the table in these present negotiations is also one on which the major parties show that there is not a dime's worth of difference between them.

The President's people want the Medicare growth to slow. The Republicans offer as part of the balanced budget the slowing of the growth of Medicare. What is left to negotiate? It seems to me that all that is left is proportions of those two elements. We ought to be able to settle it.

My gosh, I would be willing to do anything to have the President actually agree to the balanced budget. Maybe we could offer the President, look, Mr. President, perhaps we, the Republicans, would offer you, you take your choice. Take the Medicare proposals that are offered by the Republicans, and we will give you your tax cut. That way both parties, both sides of the table will have earned something on which they both agree.

□ 1900

They both want a tax cut, they both want Medicare reform. The President now takes the Republican version of Medicare, and we give him his version of a tax cut.

I know that that will not work, but the point should be made clear to the American people that both sides are